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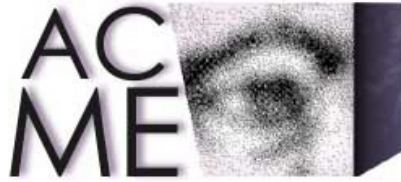
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# Time and the University

**Eli Meyerhoff<sup>1</sup>**

Department of Political Science, University of Minnesota  
[meye0781@umn.edu](mailto:meye0781@umn.edu)

**Elizabeth Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin  
<mailto:erjohnson9@wisc.edu>

**Bruce Braun<sup>1</sup>**

Department of Geography, University of Minnesota  
[braun038@umn.edu](mailto:braun038@umn.edu)

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## Abstract

Over the past twenty years, university administrators in North America, Europe and elsewhere have used the apparent ‘crisis’ in higher education as an opportunity to roll out neoliberal policies. For many working in the academy, the effect has been felt as a very real crisis of time, as budgets, resources and job positions are cut, and the working day is stretched to the limit. Resistance has often taken the form of struggles over wages and job security, and, by extension, over time measured in terms of the length and intensity of the working day. While such struggles are necessary, our contention is that they are not enough. Extending the distinction between *kairos* and *chronos* as developed in the writings of Giorgio Agamben, Antonio Negri, and Cesare Casarino, we wager that transforming higher

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education must involve more than “making more time” for our work; it must also “change” time. Only by so doing, we argue, can we realize — and expand upon — the university’s potential to *interrupt* the empty, homogenous time of capital and cultivate non-capitalist alternatives in the here-and-now. This paper thus makes three moves: one which critiques and analyzes the practices by which the university harnesses the creative time of living labor, making it both useful and safe for capital; a second which develops a ‘revolutionary’ theory of time that enables us to see capital not as the generative source of innovation, but instead as parasitic upon it; and a third, affirmative, move that explores experiments within and beyond the university with self-valorizing practices of collective learning, no longer as resource for state and capital, but as part of the ‘expansionary’ time of the common.

The original task of a genuine revolution, therefore, is never merely to ‘change the world’, but also – and above all – to ‘change time’ (Agamben, 1993 (1978)).

## Changing time

What might it mean to ‘change time’? And what would this mean in the context of life and labor in the university? Indeed, what would it mean to speak of the *time* of the university in the first place, and to imagine such a topic to be of revolutionary concern? While the notion of the university as a breeding ground for radical action is little more than popular fiction, a number of student-led movements throughout the past year have linked dissatisfaction with conditions in the university to broader struggles against capitalism and colonial occupations beyond the bounds of university campuses. The insurrections in Greece, the Anomalous Wave movement in Italy, and the building occupations at the University of Zagreb, the University of California, and across the UK—to cite only a few examples—all emerged out of dissatisfaction with an increasingly global system of higher education more beholden to profits and prestige than to research, teaching, or the collaborative production of ideas. Divestment campaigns such as PACBI have drawn attention to connections between the academy and military occupations elsewhere, revealing our place within a racialized imperial order.<sup>2</sup> These movements together serve to dispel the notion of the university as exceptional, somehow set apart from broader political and economic change; what is at stake in university politics reflects and extends well beyond it.<sup>3</sup> But they also point to what may be an even more profound question confronting the university

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<sup>2</sup> Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel ([www.pacbi.org](http://www.pacbi.org)).

<sup>3</sup> We agree with Marc Bousquet’s analysis that “the university has never been a shelter from either commerce or politics” but that the myth of (and nostalgia for) the “ivory tower” nevertheless persists with surprising tenacity (see Terranova and Bousquet, 2004).

today: its potential to open historical possibilities that are *discontinuous* with the universalizing telos of capital.

Our wager in what follows is that there can be no reworking of the university without an analysis and remaking of the *times* that it produces. Moreover, we suggest that political struggles over the future of the university that fail to pose the question of time risk reproducing many of the problems that fuel growing dissatisfaction among students, faculty and staff, not to mention growing skepticism among a wider community that often sees the university as unworthy of its support. To change time at the university is thus not merely a project of making more time, although struggles over the working day will no doubt be necessary. Rather, to change time is to interrupt the homogenous and empty time of capital by making room for and expanding upon a different temporality: the time of the ‘event.’ Such a change in time is, we argue, necessary to allow new strata of being—new subjectivities as well as alternative relations of production not easily subsumed by capital or captured within its imperial formations—to emerge.

Such a struggle over time requires a two-fold strategy of critique and experiment. We begin by attending to the ways we experience time in the university and how the multiple times within it—often ‘eventful’ and transformative—are negated, homogenized, or merely rendered productive for capital through instruments as diverse as student debt, tenure, and performance measures. But our goal is not critique for its own sake. Rather, it is to identify possible escape routes, and to point to collective experiments in areas such as labor organizing, governance and pedagogy that may be necessary if we are to expand the ‘eventful’ times of the university and thereby transform possibilities for life and labor. It is, in a sense, to write with such a temporality already in mind.

### **The subsumption of time**

If innovation is always aporetic, if it is always nourished by antagonism—if it is born as an external to the system of Power—then *it must be annulled* (Negri, 2003, emphasis in original).

The university today is faced with a crisis of time, but how we understand this crisis is paramount. The issue of time at the university is often linked to concerns about the “corporatization” of higher education and its presumed effects. Under such conditions tuition, faculty-student ratios, class sizes, ties to national defense and corporations, managerialism, contingent faculty, and administrative salaries are all seen to be on the rise, while academic freedom, tenure-track positions, graduate student funding, faculty governance, and support staff are seen to be in precipitous decline.<sup>4</sup> The same is said to be true of time—time that could otherwise be used for

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<sup>4</sup> The critique of ‘corporatization’ of higher education is not new (see Veblen, 1993 [1918]). Nevertheless, critical literature on the state of higher education has increased dramatically. A selection of work that we have

teaching preparation or collaborative research, or simply devoted to thought. As university administrators seek to achieve efficiencies, often by increasing responsibilities while reducing the resources necessary to fulfill them, time is perceived to be ever more scarce.

This scarcity of time *is* a grave concern. For many in the academy today the working day has been stretched to the limit, as faculty, students and staff find that they must provide ever more unrewarded labor in order to do even the bare minimum expected, and as even social time is subsumed into productive labor. Of course, like other forms of scarcity, the scarcity of time at the university is produced amid abundance. Witness, for instance, the building sprees on college campuses everywhere, with vast sums pumped into the latest biomedical center, business school, or nanotechnology laboratory, not to mention lucrative TV deals for varsity athletics, corporate sponsorships for shiny new sports stadiums, and countless “strategic initiatives” over which faculty have little or no oversight.<sup>5</sup> Any struggle over the working day must be waged with this larger abundance in mind. But in what follows the *scarcity* of time is not our primary concern. Indeed, while struggles over the working day enter into our account, we believe that there are good reasons not to let the primary concern about ‘time’ at the university be one about quantity. The first reason is simply because such a story invariably relies on a caricature: the university is rarely if ever the homogenous and unified abstraction that it is taken to be by critics and proponents alike.<sup>6</sup> Despite changes that have occurred over the past decades, the university is still best seen as a heterogeneous space or ‘complex whole,’ consisting of instructors, staff, students, classrooms, libraries, stadiums, laboratories, digital networks, disciplines and administrative offices which exist neither as a simple unity nor as the expression of a singular logic. As a first step, then we believe it is essential to see the university and the times produced within it as multiple and differential, so as to recognize the opportunities for critical practices and creative encounters that it continues to offer. Accordingly, we accept Nigel Thrift’s (2009) recent challenge to the university’s critics to cultivate and build upon the already existing potential of the university to be a space of production, innovation and wonder.

Such an approach is essential. But the second reason not to frame the issue of time at the university in terms of scarcity is that it fails to ask *how* time is produced at the university. We draw on the work of Giorgio Agamben, Antonio Negri, and

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found helpful includes: Terranova and Bousquet, 2004; Dyer-Witheford, 2005; Bousquet, 2008; Donoghue, 2008; Newfield, 2008; De Angelis and Harvie, 2009; Tuchman 2009, and Nelson 2010. A succinct summary of much of this literature is found in William Deresiewicz’s polemic in *The Nation*, May 23, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> We should note here, too, that the trope of ‘scarcity’ is an immensely powerful disciplinary tool wielded against labor by university administrators; despite evident abundance, faculty and staff are made to believe that they must continuously make sacrifices in order to sustain the ‘mission’ of the university.

<sup>6</sup> The abstraction of the university as a unified whole is produced not only by certain critics of the university but also by such practices as the branding of the university and the produced desire of faculty and students alike to affiliate with that brand as a means of legitimating careers and educations. These processes produce an institutional-scale version of what Timothy Mitchell calls the “state effect” (Mitchell, 1999).

Cesare Casarino to draw a crucial distinction between *chronos* and *kairos* and to suggest that what we ought to be seeking is not *more* time, as important as that is, but rather *eventful* time; not just more hours to work within the linear time of capitalist development, but rather conditions in which our work—individually and collectively—can become its own productive, self-positing and self-differentiating movement.

Although his ideas will ultimately prove insufficient, Agamben provides a propitious point of departure for any effort to rethink time at the university. In an early 1978 essay, Agamben identifies *chronos* as the time of measure produced in early Christian and Greco-Roman thought, a time which reduces all within it to a quantifiable succession of instants in which, as Casarino (2008a, 220) explains, “each instant is understood as always fleeting and hence as inconsequential in and of itself, or, put differently, as acquiring significance only insofar as it negates itself.”

This is the time of capitalism: homogeneous, empty time. Against this, Agamben (1978, 100) locates within the “folds and shadows of Western cultural tradition” other ways of figuring time.<sup>7</sup> “Kairological time,” he suggests, names a temporality in which each instant is not negated by the next, but is rather “the abrupt and sudden conjunction where decision grasps opportunity and life is fulfilled in the moment” (101). For Agamben, *kairos* interrupts *chronos*, indeed steps *outside* time-as-measure, potentially opening the present to futures in which we are not separated from our powers and capacities. Like Benjamin’s *Jetzt Zeit*—from which Agamben draws clear inspiration—this is time understood in terms of plenitude, rather than lack, a time of innovation and creation that suspends existing conditions of life and production.<sup>8</sup>

Agamben’s formulation appears well-suited for describing those moments of creative passion and collaborative learning still possible within the university today. Indeed, we experience this when we connect with our fellow students and researchers as equal participants in projects of constructing new knowledge and skills—encounters that increase our reciprocal and shared power of acting and leave us wanting more. Yet, this is *not* the kind of time that is increasingly produced within—and by—the institutions in which we work. Nor do we believe

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<sup>7</sup> Agamben turns to the Gnostic and Stoic traditions, in which he finds alternative temporalities that serve as “the bearers of a message which is meant for us and which it is our task to verify” (100). In Gnosticism, he finds “an incoherent and unhomogeneous time, whose truth is in the moment of abrupt interruption, when man, in a sudden act of consciousness, takes possession of his own condition of being resurrected” (100-01). The Stoics, he writes, posit a “liberating experience of time as something neither objective nor removed from our control, but springing from the actions and decisions of man” (101). It is here that Agamben finds histories in which *kairòlogical* time takes precedence over, or at least interrupts, chronological time.

<sup>8</sup> Agamben’s notion of *kairos* is similar to Massimo De Angelis’s (2007) concept of “phase time”: “Phase time is the time of emergence, of ‘excess’, of tangents, ‘exodus’ and ‘lines of flight’, the rupture of linearity and circularity redefining and repositing the goals and telos, as well as norms and values. It is the time of creative acts, the emergence of the new that the subject might experience in terms of what Foucault calls the limit experience, the experience of transformation.” (De Angelis, 2007, 3)

that it is enough to simply gesture to the existence and potential of *kairological* time within the interstices of the neo-liberal university. To do so implies that *interrupting* chronos is sufficient in itself. We believe such a position fails to understand the relation *between* kairos and chronos—not just how the latter might be interrupted by the former, but also how the former may be captured within, or annulled by, the latter. This is important for two reasons. First, because the first formulation presumes that chronos *precedes* kairos, such that the latter is only ever a deviation from the former. We will later suggest that it may be more helpful to privilege *kairos*, thereby understanding *chronos* as always derivative of *kairos*. In this way *chronos* comes to be seen as reduction, annulment, or capture, not unlike the relation that EP Thompson (1967) famously posited between lived time and clock time. Second, because a focus on kairos as *interruption*, without attending to chronos as *capture*, risks asserting that the time of innovation and creation is *always already* revolutionary. Thus, although our goals align with Nigel Thrift's (2011) recent emphasis on “experimentation” and “producing new means of association,” we believe that his argument that the university, even in its contemporary state, is a radical institution capable of generating genuine transformation risks celebrating innovation without adequately attending to how its radical potential is frequently annulled (see Thrift, 2009)

It may be necessary to push Agamben's arguments further. Institutions of higher education do indeed produce temporalities in which “life is fulfilled in a moment” but seeing and celebrating these moments neither recognizes nor accounts for how they are all too seldom actualized and far too rarely expanded. Instead, as Casarino suggests, drawing upon Antonio Negri's (2003, 101-108) critique of Benjamin's *Jetzt-Zeit*, Agamben's celebration of the innovative potentials of *kairos* may merely give us exactly what capitalism needs:

Far from being disruptive of the bourgeois myth of progress, the *Jetzt-Zeit* is that creative flash in history which—after its sudden, glorious, and only too episodic flare—is retranslated into quantified and measured time, and hence flattened back into the relentless march of progress precisely because it was only a flash. Far from being disruptive of capital, the *Jetzt-Zeit* provides capital with invaluable elements of innovation, with indispensable creative energies (Casarino, 2008a, 227).<sup>9</sup>

This, we might suggest, is the time of the university in its most celebrated contemporary form: continuously generating innovation as use-value for capital. For Casarino, Agamben's formulation of *kairos* as a collection of moments that interrupt time, stepping *out of* time, shears the generative and potentially transformative aspects of *kairos* away from that which gives it life—the joyful expansion of our collective capacities. So disconnected, “it becomes easy enough

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<sup>9</sup> Note that this is an extension of Negri's critique of Benjamin's notion of ‘*Jetzt-zeit*’ (Negri, 2003, 101-108).

to reduce [*kairological* time] to the abstract unit of time as measure and to put it in the service of the time of death” (Casarino, 2008a, 229). As we explain later, Negri and Casarino seek a conception of *kairos* as *constitution*, such that the ‘event’ is not merely an interruption of *chronos*, but shot through with the potential to actualize and expand *other* associations affirmative of life. The problem, then, is neither the scarcity of clock time nor the absence of revolutionary time. Instead, it is the continuous subsumption of the latter within the former. Indeed, the ongoing subsumption of revolutionary temporalities leads us to see the bleating of neo-conservatives about ‘tenured radicals’ on American campuses to be disingenuous: the university in advanced capitalism rarely serves as a generative space for radical or revolutionary practice. On the contrary, it may serve better today than almost any other institutional space to *domesticate* and *incorporate* the collective potential and revolutionary impulses of its members, continuously cultivating the type of creative energies and encounters that Thrift celebrates, but only so as to harness and subsume them within forms of capitalist measure. The result is neither the expansion of our collective powers, nor the production of what Hardt and Negri (2004) have described as the spiraling production of the common or what de Peuter and Dyer-Witheford (2010) call the circulation of the common. Instead what is produced is endless activity and innovation that may ‘add up’ in accord with the university’s metrics, but from a transformational perspective rarely ‘adds to.’

In what follows, we outline three practices by which the eventful time of production (*kairos*) is subsumed within the empty time of capitalist development. Crucially, these practices play out at the level of subjectivity, constituting modes of existence and forms of desire in which the revolutionary potential of the ‘now’ is continuously defused and deferred.<sup>10</sup>

### ***The financialization of student life***

The withdrawal of state funding and exponential rise of tuition at American universities and colleges have forced students and their parents into unprecedented levels of debt. The cost of higher education now requires many students to work extra jobs while in school, or to assemble some combination of bank and student loans, credit card debt, and service-sector employment. The effects of higher costs are far more than merely monetary. Many have rightly criticized the impact of

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<sup>10</sup> Our emphasis here on time and subjectivity does not seek to diminish the weight of structural transformations emanating from the highest level of government. Transformations at the level of the state are, indeed, notable and deserving of considerable and contentious response. Britain’s recent subsumption of higher learning under the Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills, and former New York Governor Paterson’s recent initiative to “diversify the New York economy through industry-higher education partnerships” serve as two recent - and alarming - examples of changes at this scale. See “Universities merged into business,” 2009 and Paterson, 2009. At the same time, the disjuncture between the aims of policy and practices within the university is evident in the emergence of radical management schools in the UK (Leicester and Queen Mary for instance) that trace their development to Margaret Thatcher’s shift of resources away from departments of sociology.



increasing tuition on access to higher education among members of economically and racially oppressed communities, who either cannot afford to pay tuition, or cannot access the lines of credit necessary to do so. But it is also important to recognize the subtle ways in which student debt produces new temporalities and new subjectivities. Stated simply, debt produces the student as a subject who is *already under obligation* to a future of paid labor. As Morgan Adamson (2009, 108) notes, this is congruent with a shift from disciplinary society to control society, whereby the form of life of the student is “bounded to capital while being indefinitely deferred.” In this respect, the popular image of the time of undergraduate education as a time to follow one’s passions, to experiment with one’s creative potential, is surely misplaced. The effect of debt is to introduce an imperative to rush through to graduation, taking as many courses and working as many hours in outside employment as one can manage, so as to limit the size of one’s debt and to move as quickly as possible into wage labor as a potential path to independence some time in the future.<sup>11</sup>

More insidious yet is that this state of indebtedness—and the need to “pay up” in the future—backforms onto courses of study as students (and their parents) map a path through the university in anticipation of this future as a subject in debt, deferring to some other time the pleasure of exploration and collective experimentation.<sup>12</sup> Debt defers and defuses; it encloses the subjectivity of the student as *already alienated* labor, i.e., as an individualized self *separated* from her potentiality, which no longer exists ‘for itself,’ but only as means of production to sell to a future employer.<sup>13</sup> As such, *kairological* time is subsumed and annulled under the time of capital’s circulation.

### ***The commoditization and marketization of higher education***

With declining state support and the financialization of student life, higher education has also increasingly been refashioned as a commodity. This also works to domesticate the revolutionary time of the university. Because universities today sell a path to the labor market, they must distinguish themselves in the higher education marketplace by replaying and finessing a competitive ranking system and by selling ‘marketable’ majors to the student-consumers they have enticed to their campuses. Likewise, students today are encouraged not to study and learn but to “meet requirements,” so as to enhance their own marketability. Combined with the proliferation of ‘performance indicators’—grades and credit hours—and the need to assemble a compelling resume out of such things as ‘study abroad,’ ‘community

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<sup>11</sup> For a genealogy of the myth of the ‘independent’ waged worker and her dichotomous relation to other, ‘dependent’ figures, including students, see Fraser and Gordon, 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Students may do this more under guidance and pressure from parents than they do of their own accord, as parents increasingly become underwriters of their children’s education and as a “better future” for children is more and more understood in terms of a relation to debt and measured in terms of earning potential.

<sup>13</sup> See Adamson, 2009, on student debt as a kind of “enclosure,” or what Marx called “primitive accumulation.”

service,’ and evidence of ‘leadership,’ the commoditized spaces of the university continuously encourage students to understand themselves as individuals in an agonistic relation with other students. Even as performance indicators demand cooperation on small spatio-temporal scales, such as ‘group work’ in classes, they subordinate such cooperation to a wider competition between students, redirecting collective acts of production back onto the individual. Ultimately, rather than actively shaping education to meet their needs and desires, students are encouraged to be “participatory managers” of their lives in the present, creating, desiring, and implementing metrics for measuring their own value in preparation for a future date of sale.<sup>14</sup>

Simultaneously, the corporeal pleasures of collective invention, pleasures that are not reducible to use-value for capital, are channeled and co-opted into these disciplinary practices. In their place are offered the fleeting pleasures of consumerism, packaged in the form of sports, the social life of parties, consuming hi-tech products, intellectual fads, branded clothes, student groups, even the university’s self-branding, all of which are marketed to undergraduates as part of ‘student life.’ The pleasures of learning and working together are domesticated, redirected to places that are safe for capital. Stated in slightly different terms, the commoditization of education instills in the student-consumer a habitual forgetting of the collective pleasure of education, thereby preventing the creation of forms of life wherein the sphere of pleasures can be expanded as something other than use-value for capital. As Casarino notes (2008a, 242), far from expanding the sphere of pleasure, consumerism renders the realm of non-work productive for capital and defuses its revolutionary potential: “Do you want pleasure? I’ll give you pleasure. I’ll give you all the pleasures money can buy *as long as you renounce any collective process expressive of such pleasures*, as long as you enjoy them in the time of money, as long as you fulfill them always already in the next pleasures, as long as you realize them by negating pleasure and time *tout court*” (emphasis added). In short, rather than expanding the time of constitution, consumerism *annuls* it.

### ***Participatory management in the professoriate***

Somewhat different dynamics are at play within the professoriate. Whereas debt places the student under obligation to the future, subsuming the pleasure of collective experimentation under the empty time of capital’s circulation, faculty are increasingly subject to ‘audits’ of one sort or another, whereby a set of metrics and timelines are placed on faculty work as well as a set of corresponding incentives and rewards within a wider context of produced scarcity. The distribution of rewards according to certain individualized performance indicators—teacher

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<sup>14</sup> On the concept of “participatory management,” see Lazzarato, 1996, and for its use in the context of universities, see Terranova and Bousquet, 2004 and Kamola and Meyerhoff, 2009.

evaluations, annual merit reviews, graduation rates, departmental rankings, success in internal and external competitions for research funds—has become an engrained practice on American campuses. Faculty members are thus forced to understand their efforts in relation to these metrics—not just as units produced per period of time, to use the invidious language of merit reviews, but also the *forms* of work that are accorded value. Anything that cannot be measured within these metrics comes to be seen as a ‘waste of time’, such that creative activities are channeled into a limited number of acceptable forms.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the common perception that faculty are powerless to change these conditions, there is no necessity that lies behind them—they are the contingent result of past and present struggles over university governance. A key moment in this history was the compromise of “divided governance” that occurred in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Newfield, 2003), although how this story is told matters greatly. It is not the case that only *after* this compromise the university came to be administered by ‘experts’ while before it wasn’t. Rather, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the experts who ruled the university were the *faculty*. However, their control was tenuous, leading to the founding of unions, such as the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, and professional associations that worked to resist efforts by business and government leaders to harness and/or neutralize the university’s insurgent potentials (Barrow, 1990, 206-213). During the Red Scares around World War I, the latter gained the upper hand as faculty faced threats, firings, blacklistings, and chill effects that repressed the unions and co-opted the professional associations. Under such pressure, resistant faculty were either pushed out of their universities or were forced into a compromise, the most consequential coming in 1916, when the majority of the American Association of University Professors’ leadership abandoned unionization and relinquished much of faculty’s governing power in exchange for the institutions of tenure and a weak form of academic freedom (Barrow, 1990, 219). Under this now ubiquitous system of ‘shared governance’ faculty retained the power to govern knowledge production, i.e., decisions about curriculum, publishing, hiring, promotion, and firing, but they gave up power to govern the political and economic functions of the university and put this in the hands of an administrative class.

Today, the results of this historical compromise are clear. Although the administration was initially formed as a mere executive power, they have continually taken more and more control over university policy, even as they have masked this through the façade of ‘shared governance’ in the form of ‘consultation’ with faculty, student, and university senates who have no power of their own to shape administrative practices. Further effects of this transformation include

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<sup>15</sup> David Harvie (2006) argues that such measures allow diverse academic labors to be made commensurable, and thus subject to the ‘driving down’ of socially necessary labor time. We agree. Our focus, however, is on how such metrics channel academic work down certain lines, making academic work both productive and safe for capital. It is also necessary to keep in view that such metrics are not without value; within hierarchical institutions they can play an important role undermining entrenched gender and racial biases.

internal divisions in the role of the faculty themselves, as the current system encourages them to act as participatory managers who at once *create* and *implement* the very measures to which they are subject, often in response to mandates set by administrators who remain unaccountable to faculty and staff. As intellectual laborers, faculty are made into “entrepreneurs of themselves,” essentially splitting themselves in two, becoming, as Lazzarato (2006) has recently put it, both “our own master and slave, a capitalist and a proletarian.” Even radical faculty who seek to enact transformations *outside* the university find themselves performing *within* the university as managers not only of their own labor, but of that of their students and their colleagues, designing curriculum and imposing regulations that require students be physically present and adopt a certain performative attitude during class time through the coercive metrics of attendance and participation grades.

Time on this logic of ubiquitous markets takes the form of discrete units in which the *collective* potentiality of faculty is encouraged and enabled, only to be valorized on an *individualized* basis and measured in terms of the best quality and, more often, the largest *quantity* of work within a given amount of time. Merit reviews and merit pay are perhaps the most deleterious of all, resulting in scenarios where the success of individual faculty members is claimed as theirs alone, for which every *other* member of the faculty must pay a price, and in which the contributions of colleagues, graduate students and staff are effaced. No surprise that one of the predominant emotions of the neo-liberal university is resentment rather than pleasure, or that even successful radicals in the university interpret the resentment of their peers as a character flaw rather than a structural effect.

These metrics—including those used to determine tenure—do not only subsume the creative potential of faculty within a market logic, but backform themselves into the experience of graduate school. If, in the years preceding tenure, academic labor is made to conform to a set of external measures—with serious consequences for the kinds of research and teaching that can be done—the same is true for the experience of graduate students, who from the day they begin their programs are asked to fashion themselves according to the metrics by which tenure will be decided far in the future, should they be so fortunate to gain one of a dwindling number of tenure-track jobs (Bousquet, 2008). At a time when universities frequently eliminate faculty positions that are vacated—whether through retirement, relocation, or denial of tenure—departments have little interest in hiring scholars who will not meet increasingly metricized requirements for tenure. Hence, from the day students enter graduate school the ‘job search’—a process immediately tied to the future prospect of tenure—structures the choice of courses, dissertations and committees, deferring any departures from the norm to a distant future at which time the impulse to do so may have long been extinguished. Exacerbating all of these trends, administrators have most recently produced narratives of crisis that warn of the ‘imminent’ need to pre-empt future budgetary crises by securing and enhancing institutional rankings. By propagating a scenario

in which a university's future fiscal risk is directly correlated with its national and international ranking, administrations have rendered forums of 'shared governance' little more than institutions for participatory management.<sup>16</sup> The point to be stressed, however, is that the rationale for such 'shared governance' was flawed from the outset. What faculty of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century failed to foresee (although see Veblen, 1993 [1918]) was that giving a separate class of administrators control over the budget was akin to ceding control over the university as a whole, since the 'self-governance' reserved for faculty in areas around curriculum and tenure would ultimately have to conform to economic imperatives established by administrators whose decisions faculty had little ability to influence. Indeed, if the 1916 compromise secured any measure of autonomy for university faculty, it often amounted to little more than atomization and the dubious 'privilege' of policing one's self along with one's colleagues and students. The resulting system is perhaps most notable not for the lines-of-flight it enables, but for its ability to recruit actors across the university to participate in their own subjection, essentially negating their own potential.

### Time as constitution: dilating the common

We contend that through these methods the generative, differential times of the university—those times when life is 'fulfilled in the moment'—are subsumed under forms of measure (*chronos*) that render the productive capacities of the university community infinitely productive for capital rather than for itself, thereby negating its revolutionary potential. To begin to imagine a way out, we may need to look to a different conception of *kairos* than that given by Agamben. For Antonio Negri, *kairos* refers to something quite different: more than naming only those fleeting moments of fulfillment that appear to temporarily suspend the empty, homogenous time of capital's circulation, *kairos* names instead the time of *constitution*. For Negri, *kairos* is the time of becoming, the temporality proper to the productive capacity of the multitude. As such, *kairos*—synonymous here with *potential*—is not merely interruption, as in Agamben, but as Casarino explains, names nothing more nor less than the "infinitely productive, self-positing, self-differentiating, extensive and intensive movement of desire" (2008a, 243).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> We experienced this directly at the University of Minnesota where the administration began a wide-ranging "Strategic Positioning" initiative with the goal of becoming "one of the top three public universities in the world."

<sup>17</sup> The relation we draw between *kairos* and *chronos* builds on the legacy of other conceptions of temporal class struggle, including E.P. Thompson's (1967) opposition between "clock-time" and "lived time" (or time-in-which and time-as-which) and Massimo de Angelis's (2007) distinction between capitalist and non-capitalist articulations of phase, circular, and linear time. Nevertheless, we find the temporalities proposed by Agamben, Negri, and Casarino to be of particular value for thinking our current historical juncture of post-Fordist production and its concordant society of control. Understanding *kairos* in terms of potentiality (or constitution) and *chronos* in terms of the *valorization* of the former is, in our view, the most powerful manner in which to understand and describe the relations between the eventfulness of time, the embodied experiences of pleasure

This is a crucial distinction and one that may enable us to imagine forms of exodus from *within* the neo-liberal university. If, as Negri suggests, *kairos* names an irreducible potentiality—we might call it the time of the ‘common,’ understood as the presupposition of all productive activity and containing a surplus that at once precedes and exceeds its actualization in any one form—then it is capital that must be seen as parasitic on it, rather than the reverse. This point, long dear to *autonomist* thinkers, is at once an important analytical point and an indispensable political point. Again, Casarino is a helpful guide. As he reminds us, there is in reality only *one* surplus; when we talk about the ‘surplus’ of the common and the ‘surplus value’ of capitalism, we are talking about the same thing—only there is no necessity that the former (the surplus immanent in the productive capacity of living labor) must be the latter (the ‘surplus value’ of capital): it could be actualized as something else. This is because the potentiality immanent in the ‘this here’ of our present conditions (i.e. the ‘common’ as it is currently constituted) is an *absolute potential*, which is to say that while it can be actualized in this way or that way, it can never be actualized “in and of itself.” It continues to exist *as* potential in any actualization.

This is an extraordinarily important distinction at a historical moment when capital and the common appear almost indistinguishable, and it speaks directly to the question of the university. For while capital is deeply invested in making it appear as if the potentiality of the university emanates from capital alone, as if it was capital *itself* that was the foundation for our creative activity, the concept of the ‘common’—and *kairos* as the temporality proper to it—reminds us that capitalism does not produce the common, but rather it finds its foundation ‘in’ the common (that is, in the productive capacity of living labor). Our task, Casarino reminds us, is to distinguish capital from its own foundation in the common—to posit the difference between the common and capital, and in so positing it, seize the potential of the common to be actualized otherwise.

This is a very different conception of *kairological* time than that offered by Agamben, and it leads to a very different understanding of the time of the university. For while Agamben would lead us to believe that revolution is found in the *interruption* of chronological time, he inadvertently runs the danger of imagining *chronos* as foundation, and thus of imagining the time of capital as ontologically prior to the time of production. Negri suggests something different: that the revolutionary potential of our collective existence is always already present in the productive conditions of society. The multitude is its own cause and effect; hence, we don’t need to look *elsewhere* to find it, nor do we have to wait for its arrival. It exists in the ‘this here.’ The ideological task, Casarino suggests, is to refuse the self-serving story of capital which imagines that productive power

emanates from it alone, and instead cultivate revolutionary forms of subjectivity that might begin to imagine—and practice—their productive capacity as something affirmative of life, rather than merely as use-value for capital.

But how is this to be done? How might the university be remade as an experimental space for the production of revolutionary subjects of this kind? Following the lead of Gilles Deleuze (1983), we suggest that this may require two strategies, one destructive and one creative. As Michael Hardt (1993, 29) puts it:

The negative, destructive moment of the critique (*pars destruens*) that draws the total horizon into question and destabilizes previously existing powers must clear the terrain to allow the productive moment (*pars construens*) to release or create new powers—destruction opens the way for creation.

What if the spaces and times of education were *not* limited by financialization and its accompanying disciplinary metrics? What possibilities might emerge? Might educational practices be more easily, and more directly, connected with needs and desires that arise from life and work? In so doing, could the generative and collaborative moments of education be made to have their own expanding momentum, sparking collective self-organization within and outside the walls of the academy?

For Deleuze (and Negri), apparatuses of capture must be destroyed in order to release or create new powers. But for Casarino the productive moment (*pars construens*) is equally as important. As he explains, it is only through the *expansion* of moments of fulfillment and pleasure—and the translation of pleasure into demand—that we might escape the parasitism of capital and begin to identify and produce our own needs and desires. Accordingly, Casarino refuses to reject entirely Agamben's conception of *kairos* (fulfillment in the moment) but instead combines it with Negri's (the time of constitution) in order to sketch out a political program that understands pleasure not as the negation of desire (as does Deleuze, 1997), but as that which potentially feeds back *into* desire, widening its scope and leading to new demands:

Within such a widening, pleasure is asserted in the very moment when it is seized, and in being so asserted it is made productive of yet another moment of pleasure, it becomes productive of more and more pleasurable encounters, in which the necessity of pleasure – namely, its demand – is precisely the becoming-necessary of the encounter of contingencies (Casarino, 2008a, 243).

The struggle then is to 'expand' time, rather than empty it, to 'dilate' the common so as to widen the collective sphere of pleasure, creating a new mode of desiring production. Much more than a return to hedonism, Casarino's attention to pleasurable encounters suggests a reconfiguration of the parameters of desire, of need, and of the processes of valuation that come to constitute them. In short,

Casarino's reading of *kairos* posits it as the temporal ground upon which present configurations are disrupted and new forms of production are made possible through the reconditioning of subjectivities and creating non-capitalist forms of measure.

What would it mean, then, to 'expand time' in the colleges and universities in which we work in such a way as to produce this transformation? Is it possible to dilate rather than constrain *kairos*, such that we can remake the university as a place of collective experimentation with techniques, sensibilities and strategies that would allow us, as Foucault (1988, 326) once desired, to "multiply signs of our existence"? Is it possible to experiment with spaces of education that might allow the sort of collective pleasures and "affective contagions" that Thrift (2007) has recently argued are necessary for the rise of new political imaginations, and the emergence of new political orders? And if so, might these spaces and times be linked and augmented, rather than negated by capital?

We believe so. Indeed, we believe that the desire for such experience is ready at hand. We further suggest that it can be reconstituted in part through a politics of memory, and in part through the joy of collective encounters. By memory, we do not suggest nostalgia for an earlier history of higher education. Rather, we believe that for autonomous desires to expand, their endurance is required. For *kairos* to be more than a generative instant or a momentary rupture—for it to be connected to several such instants and ruptures and for those moments to form the basis of new strata of being—such moments and their associated pleasures must be remembered and expanded, embodied in habits and pleasures. *Kairological* time must endure.

We suggest that it is the expansion—rather than merely the existence—of *kairos* that is most disrupted by the university's disciplinary mechanisms. For the financialization of the university to proceed apace, including the instantiation of alternative temporalities and subjectivities, members of the university have had to be made to unsubscribe from whatever memories they might have of collective modes of intellectual production. What is actively obliterated in the neo-liberal university, both through its own narrative projects<sup>18</sup> and through the 'cognitivation' of its measures among faculty, students and staff, is precisely those memories of communal production of ideas in other or earlier moments in life, whether with comrades in political movements, childhood friends in the playground, or the spontaneous repair shops set up by bikers in basements and garages. In important respects the university today is a place of radical unlearning, in the most reactionary of ways.<sup>19</sup> Consumerist education purges students' and

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<sup>18</sup> On the University of Minnesota campus areas designated for glorifying the achievements of successful academics, called the "Scholar's Walk" and "Wall of Discovery," are exemplary of such projects, as they—like the naming of buildings and the raising of monuments on all University campuses—embed a highly selective history of achievements in innovation and scholarship into the campus architecture.

<sup>19</sup> Unlearning can also be part of *pars destruens*, as for instance the unlearning of privilege (see Spivak 1990, 30). Such unlearning can open space for new strata of being.



researchers' memories of the association between their pleasures and the collaborative aspects of their production of ideas, knowledges, skills, texts, and desires in their classrooms and research groups, individualizing those pleasures into fetishized relations with commodities.

## Experimental time

Re-membering the pleasures of communal intellectual work may well require experimenting with the space and form of education. But what might such spaces and forms look like? One place to begin is by returning to an observation made earlier – that, in its present form, the university already exists as a ‘complex whole’ rather than a unified totality. Within its spaces there exists room for maneuver, allowing for the persistence of radical pedagogy, for example, or for campus-based social movements. Climate change actions, anti-sweatshop movements, and fair trade campaigns, to name a few of the most visible examples from the past decade, have emerged *within* the space of the university. These can be read in various ways. On the one hand, they provide evidence that, despite the financialization of student life and the subjection of academic labor to ‘audit culture,’ the university continues to provide opportunities for ‘expanding’ time. But there are various reasons to be wary of this line. First, in so far as these movements do not seek the sorts of changes they aim for *outside* the university—in production, labor-relations, ecology—*inside* the university, the time of the university remains unchanged. As important, these often simply reproduce consumer politics, such that critically minded students involved in them never step out of their role as consumers in the global marketplace. Finally, these “scatterings of micro-resistances,” often unsynchronized, tend to fade from view as their own indexed goals are achieved (Dyer-Witheford, 2005), leading to no larger, networked, movement. As such, these hints of radical activism and learning on campus might just as easily be viewed through the lens of inoculation, providing an outlet to channel student and faculty discontent into isolated segments.

Can we hope for something more? Definitely. The recent student-worker movement that emerged in California in the fall of 2009—expanding nationwide on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 with demonstrations in 32 states—offers one example. On the surface, the struggle appeared to conform to the time of *chronos* with its participants’ demands for reduced tuition and increased wages. What we are most interested in, however, are the moments within it that exhibited spatio-temporally limited creations of *kairos* that sparked and fuelled the wider movement, as seen in the movement’s most militant expression: the spectacular tactic of university occupation. Our intent is not to fetishize this tactic so much as understand how it contributes to struggles to build a broader movement. When performed in conjunction with face-to-face organizing, political education across sectors, and developing revolutionary organizational cultures and structures in workplaces, schools, and communities, a university occupation can simultaneously interrupt the

dominant time of the university and constitute new, *kairological* times around new forms of sociality. Taking the relay from the recent global current of university occupations,<sup>20</sup> activists in California responded to a 32% tuition hike with massive demonstrations that included several occupations of their campuses.<sup>21</sup> One of the most powerful instances was when 43 students and activists occupied Wheeler Hall at UC Berkeley before dawn on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Since then, participants have developed theoretical perspectives on the occupations which place emphasis on the spirally expanding interplay between interruption and reconstitution where each feeds forward into an intensification of the other.

One of the conditions of possibility for the event, we believe, came in the lines of care and interdependency that stitch our campus together but that are often disavowed or allowed to atrophy. The meaning of Friday's event may be gleaned less from its mediatized spectacularity of force and violence than the bonds of trust activated and achieved through our work of care and acts of courage. If we believe these bonds do not endure beyond the event, and if we do not stay long enough with the questions they bring to our present juncture, we shall fail the collective future we claim to imagine and put into practice (Armstrong and Nadal, 2009).

Through fostering and mobilizing these relationships, the event of the occupation effectively 'unhinged' the time of the University, such that the "steady rhythms of campus life [were] disrupted" (Armstrong and Nadal, 2009). The time that they were disrupting was one that they found was being "turned against us" and "transformed in ways that cut against our desires" (Ibid). This included an "eviscerated schedule of courses," the laying off of custodial workers – throwing them "into a precarious state of unemployment" and "effectively forc[ing] all remaining custodians to do more work in the same amount of time" – and increasing student debt, which "alienates us from the temporal substance of our lives," becoming "the privation of our present and future being" (Ibid). In such a situation the occupation was "primarily an act of refusal, an attempt to establish an outside within the administrative regime of the university, its ordering of space and time according to an economic logic" (Bernes, 2010).

Intertwined with this act of collective refusal and disruption, the event *constituted* new temporalities, subjectivities, and collectivities.

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<sup>20</sup> These university occupations include, among many others, those across France in 2006 and Greece in 2006 and 2008, the New School (2008) and New York University (2009) in New York City, all over Europe in 2009, and across the United Kingdom in 2010. For more on these see: Inoperative Committee, 2009, Schwarz, et al., 2010, and Occupation Cookbook, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> For reports and analysis of these occupations and other demonstrations in California, see After the Fall, 2010, as well as *Reclamations*, 2009 and 2010, Issues 1 and 2, <http://reclamationsjournal.org>.

Pulses accelerate to an exhilarating and terrifying beat, as masses of bodies come together and split apart in new configurations. The take-over of Wheeler Hall on November 20 was not simply a reclamation of a campus building. It was a seizing of time, a collective wielding of what is always prior to and in excess of the “here” and “now” of the status quo. Equilibrium on campus has been broken, and the ground upon which it operated has been displaced, opening up lines of care and solidarity that mark our political frontiers (Armstrong and Nadal, 2009).

These new forms of association, commons, and temporality need, not only to be constituted, but also to be continuously expanded, intensified, and interconnected, in order to give duration to the disruption and to ward off reterritorialization by state and capital.<sup>22</sup>

The police are the agents of this reterritorialization, but just as often the limits are self-imposed as an action collapses under its own gravity, leading to bargaining, concessions or a simple lack of will to continue. The outside becomes an inside, and the act of self-subtraction converts into this or that preservationist form of belonging (Bernes, 2010).

This event exhibited well the continuous back-and-forth, intertwining movements between disruption—“a newly-interiorized outside” of “the barricades around the building”—and constitution: “a hidden passageway, formed from solidarity and affection, that connected those inside the building to their comrades outside” (Ibid).

A key part of this dynamic was what we have described as the feed-forward looping effect of pleasure in the constitution of the common. If the pleasure of action is experienced in conjunction with affirmations of collectivity as its source—to use Spinozan language—the excessive desires produced by the experience are more likely to be reinvested back into projects with that collectivity. This feed-forward experience of pleasure enables the reconstitution of participants’ subjectivities in conjunction with the continuation of the new collective in “alternate forms of belonging or community that fill in the space left by the expanding outside.”

In fact, they *must* fill in this space if the outside continues to grow: the oranges and sandwiches thrown, over the riot-helmeted heads of the police, to the masked occupiers on the second floor window; the cups of soup and energy bars passed out to those assembled in front of the barricades; the spontaneous redecorations of campus; the text messages and twitters; the chants. To the extent that people, in the space opened

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<sup>22</sup> We are describing here the temporal dimensions of what de Peuter and Dyer-Witheford (2010) call the “circulation of the common” in which “a common” is “a good produced to be shared” and collectivities or “associations—organize shared resources into productive ensembles that create more commons, which in turn provide the basis for new associations” (44–45).

up by the rupture, learn to provide for each other, they fend off the moment of repression (Bernes, 2010).

Attaching new desires to the collective projects' imagined trajectories works as a counterforce against allowing those desires to become recuperated into the dominant subject-forms and institutions with their normal imagined trajectories.<sup>23</sup> A key part of this collective's project is to re-imagine time: "our differences were surely many—age, political ideology, organizational and institutional affiliations—yet what united us was the conviction we believed our action would convey: the time of the University is ours and many, and we will struggle until the doors of a genuinely open University burst forth" (Armstrong and Nadal, 2009).

The Wheeler Hall occupation had a powerfully disruptive effect on the time of the University, and it contributed to radicalizing the consciousnesses of many in California and beyond, building a base of participants for the more massive actions on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 across the US. "Temporal cracks" (Holloway 2010) were formed with an affectively contagious politics that went off in many directions, including influencing the Madison, Wisconsin occupation of the State Capitol building in February 2011, which was largely organized by students. Yet, the Wheeler Hall occupation was relatively short and ineffective compared to others recently in different national contexts: the sixty day occupation of the University of Puerto Rico in Spring 2010, the occupations of several universities in Greece during December 2008, and many of the hundreds of occupations across Europe in Fall 2009. The relatively greater sustainability, resilience, and movement-building capacity of these occupations came from the cumulative effect of earlier struggles and many contextual factors, including less powerful police forces, less indentured and more radicalized students, more self-organized student control of universities, and stronger revolutionary traditions, communities, and cultures.

How can education workers in North America build such a context of institutions, cultures and communities of resistance, subversion, and self-organization? Certainly the existence of political movements outside the University is necessary for this, but it may also depend upon subverting the existing infrastructure of the neo-liberal university and reclaiming its resources. In a recent essay, Stevphen Shukaitis (2009a) has pointed to efforts to expand and interlink the creative labors to which the university gives rise, re-appropriating the surplus common of the university to establish collaborative practices that simultaneously challenge the imposition of measure while expanding the sphere of generative encounters. Shukaitis uses Moten and Harney's (2004) term 'undercommons' to describe these networked space-times that operate outside the university's metrics while remaining attached to the university in other ways, utilizing the institution of the university, as he puts it, "not as a goal in itself, nor to assert one's right to such

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<sup>23</sup> For a politics based on subverting the recuperation of "excessive desires" into the "imagined trajectories" of dominant subject-forms, see Papadopoulos et al, 2008. For a theory of "recuperation," see Shukaitis, 2009b.

a space, but to accomplish something within [it]" (Shukaitis, 2009a). To some extent this coincides with what Gibson-Graham (2006) have described as creating 'non-capitalist spaces' in the interstices of capitalist institutions. These networks would turn the parasitic nature of the university on its head, transforming it into the host of what Shukaitis names "nomadic educational machines."

Such machines already exist and, in order to challenge the manner in which the university 'annuls' time, part of our task may be to participate in them so as to self-organize into "institutions of the common."<sup>24</sup> One such example exists in Minnesota in the form of Experimental Community Education of the Twin Cities, an organizing collective for the connecting and mutual aid of teachers and learners, based on the principle, "everyone can teach or take a class and all classes are free" (EXCO, 2009). EXCO, as its supporters affectionately call it, provides spaces and resources for people to come together and collaborate on educational projects grounded in their needs, passions, and desires, while also facilitating critical discussions of those grounds. Having emerged at Macalester College and the University of Minnesota out of struggles for accessibility and workers' rights, EXCO differs in significant ways from older versions of Experimental Colleges, Free Universities, and Free Schools. While the latter were embedded in the 1960s countercultural movement—which often led them to be removed from struggles against white supremacy and capitalism—EXCO's history of struggles is a constituent motivation of the project (Miller, 2002; McConnell, 2008). EXCO has creatively used a provision common on American campuses—the ability of students to form 'student groups' that allow them to obtain funds and reserve spaces on campus for 'student activities'—in order to try to escape the disciplining metrics of the university while expropriating its resources for an undercommons. EXCO's structure entails sharing resources and responsibilities across community-led organizing collectives, including two with university connections and one based in Minneapolis Latino/a communities that holds classes in Spanish.<sup>25</sup>

EXCO courses can be offered and taken by anyone, including members of the non-university community. In Spring 2009, EXCO offered some 70 courses around the Twin Cities, with hundreds of participants in workshops, skill-shares, and discussion groups facilitated by undergraduates, local activists and community members, collectives, and occasionally, but very rarely, by faculty. Classes are diverse. The most popular are do-it-yourself classes on such topics as bike maintenance, in some cases linked to workshops exploring alternative transportation or creating a 'bike feminism collective.' Other classes range from one exploring Somali women's experience of diaspora to a course last winter that

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<sup>24</sup> "All around the world there are a lot of experiences of self-education, autonomous universities, and organized networks of oppositional knowledge production. Now the main problem is the organization and translation of these into institutions of the common. That is to say, institutions continuously open to their own subversion, not universalistic but based on irreducible singularities, aiming toward the construction of the common and collective command within social cooperation." (de Nicola and Roggero, 2008)

<sup>25</sup> For an in-depth analysis of EXCO's history and organization, see Meyerhoff and Boehnke, forthcoming.

compared settler colonialisms in the United States, the Middle East and India. There is no tuition, no grades, each group decides its goals and objects, the kind of work people commit to do, rules for participation, and so on.

The point is not to romanticize such efforts, but to learn from them. What is most striking about EXCO is how it uses the resources of the university but escapes its metrics, not merely ‘interrupting’ the temporalities of the university, as Agamben would have it, but also using the university as a host, so as to build and add to the ‘collective potentiality’ of the common. EXCO’s class participants create new associations around educational commons and connect them with other commons throughout the city, such as food commons with community gardening and Food Not Bombs classes or media commons with Indymedia workshops, thereby enabling the “circulation of the common” (de Peuter and Dyer-Witherford, 2010). Equally as important, EXCO allows for the pleasures of collective work, and the construction of new subjectivities around these pleasures. While it would be unrealistic to imagine that every class cultivates ‘turning points’ or generates the sort of ‘affective contagions’ that underwrite the formation of new political imaginations, they arguably offer much greater sensibility to potential lines of flight. By enabling its participants to have autonomous control of the time-spaces of education, for instance, EXCO allows the education processes to be much more readily adaptable to the varied temporal rhythms and timescales of the lives, political motivations, and socio-geographic situations of the different participants. And the structure of EXCO itself—non-hierarchical and not beholden to accumulative regimes or any definitive temporal structure beyond its three-semester a year framework—encourages participants to subscribe to dispositions and values that find little support in the formal spaces of the university. Moreover, EXCO has allowed for generative encounters and collective experiments shielded from powerful interests both inside and outside the university who may have reason to stand in the way of such efforts. In the case of the Somali women, it allowed for a collaborative space out of view from husbands and elders. In the case of the class on comparative settler colonialism, it allowed for a space free from interference by powerful pro-Israel lobby groups whose members occupy key posts at the university. EXCO teaches us that the classroom can be envisioned differently, creating new space-times for collaborative learning, building non-capitalist forms of what Gibson-Graham call “diverse economies” in the here-and-now (Gibson-Graham, 2008).

These are modest efforts, but they are proliferating across the boundaries of the university, as faculty, students, and community members alike seek to produce ‘eventful’ spaces of education. What they hope to achieve is alternative institutions of education that promote self-valorization in collective learning and skill-sharing. It is through such experiments, we contend, that alternative, revolutionary subjectivities may emerge—ones capable of producing forms of life irreducible to measure, where pleasure is not only experienced in an undeferred present, but is also the product of collaborative practice. Whether or not this is revolutionary

remains to be seen, but this transformation of time and subjectivities, and the practice of making-common, are practical skills much like fixing a bike or knitting a sweater. Such skills will need to be cultivated if the pleasurable and generative encounters of the university are to aggregate, expand, and travel elsewhere. In educating ourselves to develop such creative political practices, it may not be necessary to exit the university. Rather, the task may be to organize ourselves so that we can better expropriate its differential spaces and times while simultaneously resisting the reduction of our collective innovations as use-value for capital; to feed off of the university's resources as a means toward generating joyful forms of life that expand the sphere of our pleasure.

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